

## FURNITURE EDGE PROTECTORS

### CROSS-REFERENCE TO CO-PENDING APPLICATIONS

[0001] This utility application claims priority from the filing date of February 12, 2003, of U.S. Provisional Application S.N. 60/446,879, the contents of which are incorporated herein in its entirety.

### BACKGROUND

[0002] Furniture having various fabric exteriors, including cloth, leather, etc., typically has lower edges where front and side panels cover a lower frame member and corners between the front, side and back edges. These portions of furniture are exposed to contact with people, animals and various objects, such as vacuum cleaners, children's toys, shoe heels, pet claws, etc. Such contact can immediately damage the fabric by causing a tear or rip in the fabric itself or, over repeated contact lead to a soiling or dulling of the fabric exterior.

[0003] While furniture corner protectors have been devised to protect the sharp edges of furniture during shipping and even during use, such protectors are designed for the sharp edges of wood furniture frame, and chair arm pieces. There does not appear to have been an effective attempt to devise a furniture edge protector which has a negligible or unobtrusive effect on the normal appearance on the furniture, but which is capable of protecting edges and/or corners of the furniture from damage.

[0004] Thus, it would be desirable to provide a furniture edge protector which cab be easily attached to different pieces of furniture, which is unobtrusive in use and which has a low manufacturing cost.

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] In one aspect, the present invention is a "furniture edge protector" which protects edges and/or corners of furniture from damage. The furniture edge protector is formed of a unitary body and has attachment capability means for attaching the edge protector to furniture. The body may be formed of a transparent material.

[0006] Since the transparent material is formed of a light weight, fine textured material that allows it to be seen through; the edge protector has an unobtrusive effect on the appearance of the furniture because the natural appearance of the furniture is visible at all times.

[0007] One aspect of the invention encompasses a unitary body possessing a base and two angularly disposed sides. Optional weight and material reducing apertures may be formed in the sides.

[0008] An alternate aspect of the invention encompasses a unitary body possessing first and second angularly exposed legs. Optional weight and material reducing apertures may be formed in one or both of the first and second legs.

[0009] The attachment means of the edge protector may be provided in a plurality of ways. In one aspect, the aperture in the body is formed in a base joined to the two sides and is adapted for receiving a threaded shank of the furniture leg to mount the base of the edge protector over a corner leg on the piece of furniture. Alternately, one or more apertures are formed in one of the sides of the body for receiving threaded fasteners for securing the edge protector generally over a horizontally extending edge of a piece of furniture.

[0010] The furniture edge protector is adaptable for use with a variety of furniture styles, the protector is light weight, non-obtrusive and is a cost effective means of protecting furniture from damage.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

[0011] The various features, advantages and other uses of the present invention will become more apparent by referring to the following detailed description and drawing in which:

[0012] Fig. 1 is a perspective view of one aspect of the present invention showing the inventive edge protector mounted on a corner of a piece of furniture;

[0013] Fig. 2 is a perspective view of another aspect of the furniture edge of the present invention; and

[0014] Fig. 3. is an exploded, side elevational view of the aspect of the invention shown in Fig. 2.

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0015] Referring now to Fig. 1, there is depicted one aspect of a furniture edge protector 10 according to the present invention.

[0016] For clarity and understanding of the use and advantages of the present edge protector 10, it will be understood of the following use of the edge protector 10 on a piece of furniture denoted generally by reference number 12 in Fig. 1 will be understood to be applicable to many different types and styles of furniture, not just the chair 12 shown in Fig. 1. For example, the edge protector 10 could be also used on couches, loveseats, ottomans, etc.

[0017] Further, the use of the term "edge" protector in describing the present invention will be understood to define a protector for any edge on a piece of furniture, such as a corner edge between two side panels, including the adjacent bottom edges of a piece of furniture, as well as a linear edge extending between two legs on a piece of furniture.

[0018] Thus, by example only, the chair 12 is provided with a seat cushion 14, a seat back 16, side arms 18 and 20, all of which are mounted on an interior frame. A front panel 22 is joined to two side panels 24, only one of which is shown in Fig. 1. The side panels 24 are in turn joined to a back panel also (not shown). Adjoining edges of the front panel 22, the side panels 24 and the back panel define generally vertically extending edges 26, 28 and 30.

[0019] The front panel 22, the side panels 24 and the back or rear panel also define lower, bottom edges 32 and 34, for example, in which the fabric cover of the chair 12 wraps around or is otherwise fixed to a bottom portion of the seat frame. Legs 36 are attached to the corners of the interior frame typically by a threaded shank 38 as shown in Fig 1.

[0020] In this aspect of the invention, the edge protector 10 is formed of a one piece, unitary body of a suitable, lightweight, preferably transparent material, such as a moldable, semi-rigid plastic. The exterior finish may be a gloss or a matte finish. The edge protector 10, which in this aspect of the invention is devised for mounting over any or all of the corner edges 26, 28 or 30 of the chair 12, is defined by a base 40 and two angularly disposed sides 42 and 44. The sides 42 and 44 have a generally

triangular shape, by example only, extending from the base 40 to a narrow apex 46. Optional weight and material reducing apertures of the same or various shapes may be formed in the sides 42 and 44.

[0021] Although the sides 42 and 44 may be disposed at any angle to suit the particular angle between two adjacent panels 22 and 24 of a piece of furniture, such as the chair 12, in the illustrated aspect of the edge protector 10, the sides 42 and 44 are disposed at a generally 90° angle with respect to each other and define a right triangle with respect to the base 40.

[0022] Attachment means are provided for attaching the edge protector 10 on the corners denoted by joined edges 26, 28 and 30 of the chair 12, as well as the hidden rear leg edge between the back panel and the side panels.

[0023] The attachment means may include an aperture 50 formed in the base 40 or in a leg-like extension 52 of the base 40. The aperture 50 may be in the form of a slot. The aperture 52 receives the threaded stud 38 of the chair leg 36 thereby enabling the edge protector 10 to be firmly held on the chair 12 around the edges 26, 28, 30, etc., of the chair 12 through the normal attachment of each leg 36 to the interior frame of the chair 12.

[0024] The formation of the edge protector 10 of a transparent plastic allows the color and any design in the fabric used to form the covering of the chair 12 to be visible so as to enable the edge protectors 12 to be mounted unobtrusively on the chair 12 while at the same time providing the desired function of protecting the corner edges of the chair 12 from damage.

[0025] Figures 2 and 3 depict a different aspect of the edge protector of the present invention which is denoted by reference number 60. The edge protector 60 may be used by itself or in combination with the corner edge protector described above and shown in Fig. 1. The edge protector 60 defines a shape and configuration for mounting on the bottom horizontally extending edge of the chair 12 between two opposed legs 36. Thus, the edge protector 60 may be mounted about the bottom edge of the front panel 22 of the chair 12 as well as along the bottom edge of the side panels 24 or about the bottom edge of the rear or back panel of the chair 12 if the

back panel is normally exposed to view and to potential contact with people, animals, vacuum cleaners, etc.

[0026]               The edge protector 60 is formed of a unitary, one piece body of a lightweight, transparent, moldable material, such as a moldable plastic. The body of the edge protector 60 is formed with first and second angularly exposed legs, which may be disposed at a 90° angle. The legs 62 and 64 have a generally planar shape. A plurality of apertures 66 are formed in the second leg 64 and are adapted for receiving screws or other suitable fasteners 68 for mounting the edge protector 60 to the bottom interior frame members of the chair 12. Weight and material reducing apertures may be formed in the first leg 62.

[0027]               Thus, there has been disclosed an edge protector for a piece of furniture having a body with angularly disposed sides. Attachment means are formed in the body for receiving a fastener to attach the edge protector to the piece of furniture.